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LETTER DATED 6 SEPTEMBER 2000 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF REMARKS MADE BY PRESIDENT CLINTON ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2000 AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CONCERNING NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE, AS WELL AS A FACT SHEET ON MISSILE DEFENSE

Attached is the text of remarks made by President Clinton on 1 September 2000 at Georgetown University concerning National Missile Defense, as well as a fact sheet on Missile Defense.

I would be grateful if you would issue these texts as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament and distribute it to all member States and non-member participant States of the CD.

(Signed) Robert T. Grey, Jr.
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the United States of America to the
Conference on Disarmament

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REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE

Gaston Hall
Georgetown University
Washington, D.C.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. When you gave us such a warm welcome, and then you applauded some of Dean Gallucci's early lines, I thought to myself, I'm glad he can get this sort of reception, because I gave him a lot of thankless jobs to do in our administration where no one ever applauded -- and he did them brilliantly. I'm delighted to see him here succeeding so well as the Dean. And Provost Brown, thank you for welcoming me here.

I told them when I came in I was sort of glad Father O'Donovan wasn't here today, because I come so often -- I know that at some point if I keep doing this he will tell me that he's going to send a bill to the U.S. Treasury for the Georgetown endowment.

I was thinking when we came out here and Bob talked about the beginning of the school year that it was 35 years ago when, as a sophomore, I was in charge of the freshman orientation. So I thought I should come and help this year's orientation of freshmen get off to a good start.

I also was thinking, I confess, after your rousing welcome, that if I were still a candidate for public office I might get up and say hello and sit down, and quit while I'm ahead.

I came today to talk about a subject that is not fraught with applause lines, but one that is very, very important to your future: the defense of our nation. At this moment of unprecedented peace and prosperity, with no immediate threat to our security or our existence, with our democratic values ascendant and our alliances strong, with the great forces of our time, globalization and the revolution in information technology so clearly beneficial to a society like ours, with our diversity and our openness, and our entrepreneurial spirit.

At a time like this it is tempting, but wrong, to believe there are no serious long-term challenges to our security. The rapid spread of technology across increasingly porous borders,

raises the specter that more and more states, terrorists and criminal syndicates could gain access to chemical, biological or even nuclear weapons, and to the means of delivering them -- whether in small units deployed by terrorists within our midst, or ballistic missiles capable of hurtling those weapons halfway around the world.

Today I want to discuss these threats with you, because you will live with them a lot longer than I will. Especially, I want to talk about the ballistic missile threat. It is real and growing, and has given new urgency to the debate about national missile defenses, known in the popular jargon as NMD.

When I became President, I put our effort to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction at the very top of our national security agenda. Since then, we have carried out a comprehensive strategy to reduce and secure nuclear arsenals, to strengthen the international regime against biological and chemical weapons and nuclear testing, and to stop the flow of dangerous technology to nations that might wish us harm.

At the same time, we have pursued new technologies that could strengthen our defenses against a possible attack, including a terrorist attack here at home.

None of these elements of our national security strategy can be pursued in isolation. Each is important, and we have made progress in each area. For example, Russia and the United States already have destroyed about 25,000 nuclear weapons in the last decade. And we have agreed that in a START III treaty, we will go 80 percent below the level of a decade ago.

In 1994, we persuaded Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus, three of the former Soviet Republics, to give up their nuclear weapons entirely. We have worked with Russia and its neighbors to dispose of hundreds of tons of dangerous nuclear materials, to strengthen controls on a list of exports, and to keep weapon scientists from selling their services to the highest bidder.

We extended the nuclear non-proliferation treaty indefinitely. We were the very first nation to sign the comprehensive test ban treaty, an idea first embraced by Presidents Kennedy and Eisenhower. Sixty nations now have ratified the test ban treaty. I believe the United States Senate made a serious error in failing to ratify it last year, and I hope it will do so next year.

We also negotiated and ratified the international convention to ban chemical weapons, and strengthened the convention against biological weapons. We've used our export controls to deny terrorists and potential adversaries access to materials and equipment needed to build these kinds of weapons.

We've imposed sanctions on those who contribute to foreign chemical and biological weapons programs, we've invested in new equipment and medical countermeasures to protect people from exposure. And we're working with state and local medical units all over our country to strengthen our preparedness in case of a chemical or biological terrorist attack, which many people believe is the most likely new security threat of the 21st century.

We have also acted to reduce the threat posed by states that have sought weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, while pursuing activities that are clearly hostile to our long-term interests. For over a decade -- for almost a decade, excuse me -- we have diverted about 90 percent of Iraq's oil revenues from the production of weapons to the purchase of food and medicine.

This is an important statistic for those who believe that our sanctions are only a negative for the people, and particularly the children, of Iraq. In 1989, Iraq earned $15 billion from oil exports, and spent $13 billion of that money on its military. This year, Iraq is projected to earn $19 billion from its legal oil-for-food exports that can spend none of those revenues on the military.

We worked to counter Iran's efforts to develop nuclear weapons and missile technology, convincing China to provide no new assistance to Iran's nuclear program, and pressing Russia to strengthen its controls on the export of sensitive technologies.

In 1994, six years after the United States first learned that North Korea had a nuclear weapons program, we negotiated the agreement that verifiably has frozen its production of plutonium for nuclear weapons. Now, in the context of the United States negotiations with the North, the diplomatic efforts by former Defense Secretary Bill Perry and, most lately, the summit between the leaders of North and South Korea, North Korea has refrained from flight testing a new missile that could pose a threat to America.

We should be clear: North Korea's capability remains a serious issue and its intentions remain unclear. But its missile testing moratorium is a good development worth pursuing.

These diplomatic efforts to meet the threat of proliferation are backed by the strong and global reach of our armed forces. Today, the United States enjoys overwhelming military superiority over any potential adversary. For example, in 1985, we spent about as much on defense as Russia, China and North Korea combined. Today, we spend nearly three times as much, nearly $300 billion a year. And our military technology clearly is well ahead of the rest of the world.

The principle of deterrence served us very well in the Cold War, and deterrence remains imperative. The threat of overwhelming retaliation deterred Saddam Hussein from using weapons of mass destruction during the Gulf War. Our forces in South Korea have deterred North Korea in aggression for 47 years.

The question is, can deterrence protect us against all those who might wish us harm in the future? Can we make America even more secure? The effort to answer these questions is the impetus behind the search for NMD. The issue is whether we can do more, not to meet today's threat, but to meet tomorrow's threat to our security.

For example, there is the possibility that a hostile state with nuclear weapons and long range missiles may simply disintegrate, with command over missiles falling into unstable hands; or that in a moment of desperation, such a country might miscalculate, believing it could use nuclear weapons to intimidate us from defending our vital interests, or from coming to the aid of our allies, or others who are defenseless and clearly in need.

In the future, we cannot rule out that terrorist groups could gain the capability to strike us with nuclear weapons if they seized even temporary control of a state with an existing nuclear weapons establishment.

Now, no one suggests that NMD would ever substitute for diplomacy or for deterrence. But such a system, if it worked properly, could give us an extra dimension of insurance in a world where proliferation has complicated the task of preserving the peace. Therefore, I believe we have an obligation to determine the feasibility, the effectiveness, and the impact of

a national missile defense on the overall security of the United States.

The system now under development is designed to work as follows. In the event of an attack, American satellites would protect the launch of missiles. Our radar would track the enemy warhead and highly accurate, high-speed, ground-based interceptors would destroy them before they could reach their target in the United States.

We have made substantial progress on a system that would be based in Alaska and that, when operational, could protect all 50 states from the near-term missile threats we face, those emanating from North Korea and the Middle East. The system could be deployed sooner than any of the proposed alternatives.

Since last fall, we've been conducting flight tests to see if this NMD system actually can reliably intercept a ballistic missile. We've begun to show that the different parts of this system can work together.

Our Defense Department has overcome daunting technical obstacles in a remarkably short period of time, and I'm proud of the work that Secretary Cohen, General Shelton and their teams have done.

One test proved that it is, in fact, possible to hit a bullet with a bullet. Still, though the technology for NMD is promising, the system as a whole is not yet proven. After the initial test succeeded, our two most recent tests failed, for different reasons, to achieve an intercept. Several more tests are planned. They will tell us whether NMD can work reliably under realistic conditions. Critical elements of the program, such as the booster rocket for the missile interceptor, have yet to be tested.

There are also questions to be resolved about the ability of the system to deal with countermeasures. In other words, measures by those firing the missiles to confuse the missile defense into thinking it is hitting a target when it is not.

There is a reasonable chance that all these challenges can be met in time. But I simply cannot conclude with the information I have today that we have enough confidence in the technology, and the operational effectiveness of the entire NMD system, to move forward to deployment.

Therefore, I have decided not to authorize deployment of a national missile defense at this time. Instead, I have asked Secretary Cohen to continue a robust program of development and testing. That effort still is at an early stage. Only three of the 19 planned intercept tests have been held so far. We need more tests against more challenging targets, and more simulations before we can responsibly commit our nation's resources to deployment.

We should use this time to ensure that NMD, if deployed, would actually enhance our overall national security. And I want to talk about that in a few moments.

I want you to know that I have reached this decision about not deploying the NMD after careful deliberation. My decision will not have a significant impact on the date the overall system could be deployed in the next administration, if the next President decides to go forward.

The best judgment of the experts who have examined this question is that if we were to commit today to construct the system, it most likely would be operational about 2006 or 2007. If the next President decides to move forward next year, the system still could be ready in the same time frame.

In the meantime, we will continue to work with our allies and with Russia to strengthen their understanding and support for our efforts to meet the emerging ballistic missile threat, and to explore creative ways that we can cooperate to enhance their security against this threat, as well.

An effective NMD could play an important part of our national security strategy, but it could not be the sum total of that strategy. It can never be the sum total of that strategy for dealing with nuclear and missile threats.

Moreover, ballistic missiles, armed with nuclear weapons, as I said earlier, do not represent the sum total of the threats we face. Those include chemical and biological weapons, and a range of deadly technologies for deploying them. So it would be folly to base the defense of our nation solely on a strategy of waiting until missiles are in the air, and then trying to shoot them down.

We must work with our allies, and with Russia, to prevent potential adversaries from ever threatening us with nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction in the first

place, and to make sure they know the devastating consequences of doing so.

The elements of our strategy cannot be allowed to undermine one another. They must reinforce one another, and contribute to our national defense in all its dimensions. That includes the profoundly important dimension of arms control.

Over the past 30 years, Republican and Democratic presidents alike have negotiated an array of arms control treaties with Russia. We and our allies have relied on these treaties to ensure strategic stability and predictability with Russia, to get on with the job of dismantling the legacy of the Cold War, and to further the transition from confrontation to cooperation with our former adversary in the most important arena, nuclear weapons.

A key part of the international security structure we have built with Russia and, therefore, a key part of our national security, is the anti-ballistic missile treaty signed by President Nixon in 1972. The ABM treaty limits anti-missile defenses according to a simple principle: neither side should deploy defenses that would undermine the other side's nuclear deterrent, and thus tempt the other side to strike first in a crisis or to take countermeasures that would make both our countries less secure.

Strategic stability, based on mutual deterrence, is still important, despite the end of the Cold War. Why? Because the United States and Russia still have nuclear arsenals that can devastate each other. And this is still a period of transition in our relationship.

We have worked together in many ways. Signed an agreement of cooperation between Russia and NATO. Served with Russian troops in Bosnia and Kosovo. But while we are no longer adversaries, we are not yet real allies. Therefore, for them as well as for us, maintaining strategic stability increases trust and confidence on both sides. It reduces the risk of confrontation. It makes it possible to build an even better partnership and an even safer world.

Now, here's the issue: NMD, if deployed, would require us either to adjust the treaty or to withdraw from it -- not because NMD poses a challenge to the strategic stability I just discussed, but because by its very words, NMD prohibits any national missile defense.

What we should want is to both explore the most effective defenses possible, not only for ourselves, but for all other law-abiding states, and to maintain our strategic stability with Russia. Thus far, Russia has been reluctant to agree, fearing I think, frankly, that in some sense, this system or some future incarnation of it could threaten the reliability of its deterrence and, therefore, strategic stability.

Nevertheless, at our summit in Moscow in June, President Putin and I did agree that the world has changed since the ABM treaty was signed 28 years ago, and that the proliferation of missile technology has resulted in new threats that may require amending that treaty. And again, I say, these threats are not threats to the United States alone.

Russia agrees that there is an emerging missile threat. In fact, given its place on the map, it is particularly vulnerable to this emerging threat. In time, I hope the United States can narrow our differences with Russia on this issue. The course I have chosen today gives the United States more time to pursue that, and we will use it.

President Putin and I have agreed to intensify our work on strategic defense, while pursuing, in parallel, deeper arms reductions in START III. He and I have instructed our experts to develop further cooperative initiatives in areas such as theater missile defense, early warning and missile threat discussions for our meeting just next week in New York.

Apart from the Russians, another critical diplomatic consideration in the NMD decision is the view of our NATO allies. They have all made clear that they hope the United States will pursue strategic defense in a way that preserves, not abrogates, the ABM treaty. If we decide to proceed with NMD deployment we must have their support, because key components of NMD would be based on their territories.

The decision I have made also gives the United States time to answer our allies' questions and consult further on the path ahead.

Finally, we must consider the impact of a decision to deploy on security in Asia. As the next President makes a deployment decision, he will need to avoid stimulating an already dangerous regional nuclear capability from China to

South Asia. Now, let me be clear: no nation can never have a veto over American security, even if the United States and Russia cannot reach agreement; even if we cannot secure the support of our allies at first; even if we conclude that the Chinese will respond to NMD by increasing their arsenal of nuclear weapons substantially with a corollary, inevitable impact in India and then in Pakistan.

The next President may nevertheless decide that our interest in security in 21st century dictates that we go forward with deployment of NMD. But we can never afford to overlook the fact that the actions and reactions of others in this increasingly interdependent world do bear on our security.

Clearly ,therefore, it would be far better to move forward in the context of the ABM treaty and allied support. Our efforts to make that possible have not been completed. For me, the bottom line on this decision is this: because the emerging missile threat is real, we have an obligation to pursue a missile defense system that could enhance our security.

We have made progress, but we should not move forward until we have absolute confidence that the system will work, and until we have made every reasonable diplomatic effort to minimize the cost of deployment, and maximize the benefit, as I said, not only to America's security, but to the security of law abiding nations everywhere subject to the same threat.

I am convinced that America and the world will be better off if we explore the frontiers of strategic defenses, while continuing to pursue arms control, to stand with our allies and to work with Russia and others to stop the spread of deadly weapons.

I strongly believe this is the best course for the United States, and therefore the decision I have reached today, is in the best security interest of the United States. In short, we need to move forward with realism, with steadiness, and with prudence, not dismissing the threat we face, or assuming we can meet it, while ignoring our overall strategic environment, including the interests and concerns of our allies, friends and other nations. A national missile defense, if deployed, should be part of a larger strategy to preserve and enhance the peace, strength and security we now enjoy, and to build an even safer world.

FACT SHEET

National Missile Defense

The Clinton Administration is committed to the development of a limited National Missile Defense (NMD) system designed to protect all 50 states from the emerging ballistic missile threat from nations that threaten international peace and security. In the event of an attack, American satellites would detect the launch of missiles; radar would track the enemy warheads; and highly accurate, high-speed ground-based interceptors would destroy missiles before they reach targets in the United States.

NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE DECISION

President Clinton announced today that the NMD program is sufficiently promising and affordable to justify continued development and testing, but that there is not sufficient information about the technical and operational effectiveness of the entire NMD system to move forward with deployment.

In making this decision, the President considered the threat, the cost, technical feasibility and the impact overall on our national security of proceeding with NMD. He considered a thorough technical review by the Department of Defense as well as the advice of his top national security advisors.

The Pentagon has made progress on developing a system that can address the emerging missile threat. But we do not have sufficient information to conclude that it can work reliably under realistic conditions. Critical elements of the program, such as the booster rocket for the missile interceptor, have not been tested; and there are questions to be resolved about the ability of the system to deal with countermeasures. The President made clear we should not move forward until we have further confidence that the system will work and until we have made every reasonable diplomatic effort to minimize the costs.

The Pentagon will continue the development and testing of the NMD system. That effort is still at an early stage: three of the nineteen planned intercept tests have been held so far. Additional ground tests and simulations will also take place.

The development of our NMD is part of the Administration's comprehensive national security strategy to prevent potential adversaries from threatening the United States with such weapons and acquiring the weapons in the first place.

Arms control agreements with Russia are an important part of this strategy because they ensure stability and predictability between the United States and Russia, promote the dismantling of nuclear weapons, and help complete the transition from confrontation to cooperation with Russia. The Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972 limits anti-missile defenses according to a simple principle: neither side should deploy defenses that would undermine the other's nuclear deterrent, and thus tempt the other to strike first in a crisis or take countermeasures that would make both our countries less secure.

This announcement will provide additional time to pursue with Russia the goal of adapting the ABM treaty to permit the deployment of a limited NMD that would not undermine strategic stability. The United States will also continue to consult with Allies and continue the dialogue with China and other states.

An NMD program that meets the projected threat

Last August, the President decided that the initial NMD architecture would include: 100 ground-based interceptors deployed in Alaska, one ABM radar in Alaska, and five upgraded early warning radars.

This approach is the fastest, most affordable, and most technologically mature approach to fielding an effective NMD against the projected threat. It would protect all 50 states against emerging threats from both North Korea and the Middle East and is optimized against the most immediate and certain threat, North Korea.

On July 23, 1999, President Clinton signed into law H.R. 4, the "National Missile Defense Act of 1999," stating that it is the policy of the United States to deploy as soon as technologically possible an effective NMD system. The legislation includes two amendments supported by the Administration: the first making clear that any NMD deployment must be subject to the authorization and appropriations process, and thus that no decision on deployment has been made; the second stating it is the policy of the United States to seek continued negotiated reductions in Russian nuclear forces, putting Congress on record as continuing to support negotiated reductions in strategic nuclear arms, reaffirming the Administration's position that missile defense policy must take into account important arms control and nuclear nonproliferation objectives.

NMD Budget

The Clinton Administration has spent approximately $5.7 billion on NMD, and budgeted an additional $10.4 billion in FY 2001-2005 to support possible deployment of the initial NMD architecture.
Our current estimate for developing, procuring and deploying our initial system -- 100 interceptors, an ABM radar, upgrades to 5 early warning radars, and command and control -- is around $25 billion (Fiscal Years 91-09). But to put that in perspective, it represents less than 1 percent of the defense budget over the coming six years.

Joint Statement of Principles on Strategic Stability

At the June 4 Moscow summit, Presidents Clinton and Putin signed a Joint Statement of Principles on Strategic Stability. The Principles state that the international community faces a dangerous and growing threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, including missiles and missile technologies, and that there is a need to address these threats, including through consideration of changes to the ABM Treaty. The Principles also record agreement to intensify discussions on both ABM issues and START III.

Joint Statement on Cooperation on Strategic Stability

The United States has made clear to Russia that we are prepared to engage in serious cooperation to address the emerging ballistic missile threat and have identified a number of specific ideas for discussion. At the June 4 Moscow Summit, Presidents Clinton and Putin signed an agreement to establish a Joint Center for exchanging early warning data on missile launches; they also agreed to explore more far-reaching cooperation to address missile threats.

On July 21 in Okinawa, Presidents Clinton and Putin issued a Joint Statement on Cooperation on Strategic Stability, which identifies specific areas and projects for cooperation to control the spread of missiles, missile technology and weapons of mass destruction.